



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 2
290 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

DEC 19 2014

The Honorable Peter T. King
U.S. House of Representatives
339 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-3202

Dear Congressman King:

Thank you for your November 12, 2014 letter to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Gina McCarthy concerning the Northrup Grumman Aerospace Corporation and U.S. Naval Weapons Industrial Reserve Plant site in Bethpage, New York, which was referred to me for response. Your letter requests that the EPA work with the Navy, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and local water districts to implement a comprehensive remediation plan to address contaminated groundwater in this area.

I appreciate your concerns regarding impacts to local water supplies and the potential health risks to the public, and the need for a comprehensive coordinated remediation plan. In fact, EPA has been working with NYSDEC and the Bethpage and Massapequa water districts and has discussed the recent findings with both. The EPA and NYSDEC are in agreement that the remediation of the plume needs to be expedited, and that communication and coordination within and among the government agencies (NYSDEC, EPA, municipal water districts) and the potentially responsible parties (Navy and Northrup Grumman) must be enhanced.

On November 25, 2014, the EPA met with the superintendents of the Massapequa and Bethpage water districts and informed them of the planned efforts to enhance coordination and to move the project along. The EPA identified the following measures that have or will be implemented toward this end:

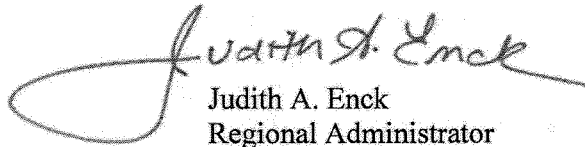
- In a November 5, 2014 letter, NYSDEC instructed the Navy to submit, within 60 days, a work plan for the design and installation of a collection and treatment system for the contaminated groundwater plume;
- In a November 21, 2014 letter, NYSDEC notified Northrup Grumman that it expects the company to assist the Navy in designing and installing a collection and treatment remedy for the plume, and to enter into an Order of Consent to undertake this work;
- The EPA intends to issue an administrative order to Northrup Grumman if the company does not make substantive progress toward entering into an order with NYSDEC within the next several weeks;
- NYSDEC will require the Navy and Northrup Grumman to provide validated sampling data more expeditiously. NYSDEC expects that raw, validated data be submitted to NYSDEC and shared with other government agencies within 75 days of collection;

- NYSDEC will hold quarterly technical conference calls/meetings with the EPA, the Navy, Northrup Grumman and the water districts.

The EPA had a follow up meeting with the water districts on December 16, 2014 that included NYSDEC, and the Massapequa, Bethpage and South Farmingdale Water Districts. The meeting focused on how the parties could work to address the important challenges presented by the groundwater contamination. The meeting was positive with all parties agreeing that enhanced coordination among the state, local and federal governments was essential to ensure that parties responsible for the contamination address the cleanup of the groundwater in an active and timely manner. The EPA and NYSDEC identified areas where the water districts expertise could be particularly helpful, such as assisting in the identification of locations for the extraction wells and infrastructure (piping, treatment plant locations), as well options for disposition of the large quantity of treated water expected to be generated during remediation. It was agreed that the parties should schedule another meeting in March and that quarterly meetings should be scheduled that include the Navy and Northrup Grumman. We expect that a comprehensive, coordinated effort on behalf of all stakeholders will ensure the protection of the Bethpage, Massapequa and South Farmingdale groundwater supplies.

Thank you for your interest in this issue. If you have further questions, please contact me at (212) 637-5000, or Mike McGowan, Chief of the Intergovernmental and Community Affairs Branch, at (212) 637-4972.

Sincerely,



Judith A. Enck
Regional Administrator